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From: Swift Incoming Telegrams (Machine 1)
Sent: 01 March 2003 14:14
To: NAD
Subject: LEAD: PP WASHI/FCOLN 274: US: VALEDICTORY

Classification: RESTRICTED
DTGM: 280045Z FEB
Message To: FCOLN
MessageFrom: WASHI

ZCZC
MDDPAN 5415 OVMDHN 0135
RESTRICTED
FFFF RETRIEVED MESSAGE
PP FCOLN
FM WASHI TO FCOLN
280045Z FEB
GRS 1164

RESTRICTED
FM WASHINGTON
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELNO 274
OF 280045Z FEBRUARY 03
INFO PRIORITY ALL DIPLOMATIC POSTS, ADMINISTRATOR ASCENSION
INFO ROUTINE CABINET OFFICE, DFID, DTI, HM TREASURY, MODUK, SOSFA
INFO ROUTINE US POSTS

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PART ONE OF TWO

SUBJECT: US: VALEDICTORY

CABINET OFFICE FOR MANNING, POWELL, RYCROFT AT NO 10

SUMMARY

1. The single greatest challenge to British foreign policy is the successful handling of relations with the United States. The priority, resources and training that we devote to this fall far short of what is required. If this continues, the UK will lose influence in its most important bilateral relationship.

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8. There is nothing automatic about access and influence. The "special relationship" was not recognised on either side of the Atlantic before the Second World War. It has since then covered a half century of peaks and troughs. Even at the peaks - like now - it takes hard pounding to leverage the "special relationship" into privileged economic benefits for Britain. The UK and the US remain, by far, each other's single biggest foreign direct investors, generating at least a million jobs in each. But there have been setbacks. We have failed to secure a new air services agreement; took a big hit along with other EU countries from the doubling of steel tariffs; and, 3 years on, have still not been able to conclude an agreement which would liberalise export licences for the sale of military equipment to the UK. We shall see how well British firms do in winning contracts for the reconstruction of Iraq.

9. The defining features of the British/American relationship today are the high level of mutual confidence and trust from the Prime Minister and President downwards; the closeness of cooperation on foreign, security, intelligence and defence issues; the very high levels of access enjoyed by the Ambassador and his staff; and Britain's ability to influence American decision-taking. Thatcher/Reagan, Macmillan/Kennedy and Churchill/Roosevelt presided over similar periods. These are not pre-ordained. An alternative British/American template is Wilson/LBJ, Thatcher/Bush senior, Major/Clinton. In all three cases the absence of personal chemistry was aggravated by disagreements over substance. Wilson would not send troops to Vietnam. Bush senior started out looking to Germany as the US' partner of choice in Europe. Bosnia bedevilled the Major/Clinton relationship, and for a time some in the White House held France in higher regard.

10. Accidents of personal chemistry or coincidences of strategic vision are not a law of nature. Sooner or later there will again be a prime minister and president, a foreign secretary and a

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secretary of state, who do not get on. Having the right people with the right experience to staff the network is even more important in the lean years. The Embassy assumed almost the entire burden of British-American relations in the long hiatus between Clinton and Bush. The mythology of the "special relationship", and the many, real points of congruence between Britain and the United States, obscure profound differences of culture, outlook and values. This plays straight into the way we negotiate with Americans and seek to influence them.

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MAIN 1

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NAD 0

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RHD HSP 0

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NAPRG 0

PS PUS 1

PS B SYMONS 0

DG CORPORATE AFFAIRS 0

DIR INFORMATION 0

DIR PC 0

DIR SOUTH ASIA 0

DSI//DIRECTOR 0

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From: Swift Incoming Telegrams (Machine 1)
 Sent: 01 March 2003 14:12
 To: NAD
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444 020 100 8 103

Classification: RESTRICTED
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 Message To: FCOLN
 MessageFrom: WASHI

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 MDDPAN 5414 ZILNAN 3304
 RESTRICTED
 FFFF PART TWO OF TWO
 PP FCOLN INTRA SOSFA TRESY
 FM WASHI TO FCOLN
 280045Z FEB
 GRS 1127

RESTRICTED
 FM WASHINGTON
 TO PRIORITY FCO
 TELNO 274
 OF 280045Z FEBRUARY 03
 INFO PRIORITY ALL DIPLOMATIC POSTS, ADMINISTRATOR ASCENSION
 INFO PRIORITY CABINET OFFICE, DFID, DTI, HM TREASURY, MODUK, SOSFA
 INFO PRIORITY US POSTS

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PART TWO OF TWO

SUBJECT: US VALEDICTORY

13. I thought that the culture of multilateralism and global issues dominated the Leadership Conference. There is nothing wrong with either, provided that other vital British interests are not neglected. But, we now appear to place less importance on nurturing the instruments of influence over the most powerful nation on the planet than when I arrived in Washington 5 years ago. Preeminence is given to approaching the US through the prism of functional and global issues. Americas Command and the US network are strapped for cash. Not so Global Issues Command and our mission to the UN, so a small bird tells me. The Director Americas-designate, about to complete 8 years' continuous service in the US, has been told that he should focus on Central and South America. As far as the US is concerned, I have been told that I can do the Director's job as well as my own. This is nonsense.

14. I know that money is tight and that there cannot be an exact mathematical correlation between priorities and resources. But there has to be some connection. Imaginative ideas for sowing seed corn influence in the US have just been rejected by the Public Diplomacy Challenge Fund; Canada has four times the Category 1 visitors per capita that the US has; the Command Programme Budget is skewed to Latin America; the Global Opportunities Fund is targeted at priorities elsewhere; a question

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mark still hangs over giving Denver full Consulate-General status, though this was an Inspectorate recommendation in 1999 and BTI wants to go ahead. Arbitrary cuts in our budget play havoc with strategic planning and threaten relations with US-engaged staff, 75% of our work force. The Marshall Scholarships, one of the most important levers of long-term British influence in America, are repeatedly threatened by those who see them as low-hanging fruit in the search for economies.

15. At the Leadership Conference the Prime Minister was eloquent in his avowal of the US as Britain's most important bilateral partner. There is little recognition of this, or of your call last year for a "step-change" in relations with the US, in the first conclusions of the Conference. I fear for the much-heralded Strategy. Its promulgation should be the opportunity to give, for the long-term, the priority which our relations with America demand, and currently lack.

16. It is not just resources. The way we prepare staff for postings in the US is haphazard. I am a prime example: a Sovietologist who stumbled on America by accident in 1988. There is no US career anchor; no systematic training in US affairs; and little recognition of the need for these things. It is not good enough to assume that expertise in other disciplines, which bring people into contact with their American opposite numbers, is sufficient preparation for the US. Far too many London officials cultivate direct contacts with American officials, and think, wrongly, that they have the whole picture. Far too many of my staff have to spend months learning to speak American.

17. The US is too important, too complex and too different to be left to improvisation. If we prepare people with great care, as we should, for Russia, the EU or the Middle East, similar care should be taken for the US. We need a cadre of American specialists in the FCO and across Whitehall. That means proper training and sending bright, young officers as interns to our Consulates-General and to Washington. It means recognising the post of Consul-General for what it is: a job more heavily loaded than most sovereign heads of missions, requiring a full range of skills, harnessed to resourcefulness, ambition and energy.

18. Anti-Americanism stalks the land. The United States can be infuriating to deal with. For some the combination of moral rectitude and brute power is hard to take. No doubt people said much the same about the British in the 19th Century. But you don't need to have gone native to be with Gerry Baker on the op-ed page of the FT for 27 February. Overwhelmingly the US is, and has been, a power for good. Its people are among the most generous spirited on earth. For Europeans two models for handling America present themselves: the Blair and the Chirac. I have married French wives, live part of the year in France, was schooled in France. But the French have got this badly wrong.

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MAIN 1

DESPATCHES/REVIEWS 0

NAD 0

BCP 0

CCD 0

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PS PUS 1

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